

# SHOPPING ASSISTANCE

## *Volunteer*

# GUIDE



Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Schuyler County Office for the Aging (OFA). OFA volunteers are making a huge difference in the lives of older adults, age 60+ in Schuyler County.

Shopping assistance is a rewarding position! Volunteers shop for groceries for homebound older adults. This provides a safety check, socialization and gives them the independence to remain in the place they love most, home!

This handy guide will provide you with all of the essential information to help you decide if Shopping Assistance is the right position for you. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best regards,

Holly Patelunas

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Holly Patelunas

Volunteer Coordinator

[hpatelunas@co.schuyler.ny.us](mailto:hpatelunas@co.schuyler.ny.us)

607-535-7108

# History

Schuyler County Office for the Aging was established as a result of the Older Americans Act of 1965 with the core function being provision of information/referrals and services for county residents age 60 and over, as well as their caregivers. A variety of programs are offered through nutrition services, in-home services, benefits assistance and general services.

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The Office is funded by the Administration on Aging, the NYS Office for the Aging, County of Schuyler, client contributions, sponsorship, and general donations.

# Mission



To advocate for, educate and assist the senior and disabled populations of Schuyler County to live in the most independent and integrated setting through community collaboration providing for well-being/health, security, dignity, autonomy and choice through innovative home and community-based services.

# Benefits of Volunteering

## MIND



- Improve your mood
- Reduce stress & anxiety
- Combat depression

## BODY



- Stay active
- Reduce risk of high blood pressure & heart disease
- Live longer

## SOCIAL



- Create new connections & friends
- Develop emotional stability
- Combat loneliness/isolation

## CAREER



- Build confidence
- Develop skills
- Build your resume

# What is Shopping Assistance?

Provide support to older adults age 60+ in Schuyler County who are isolated because of physical and/or cognitive limitations.



OFA PROVIDES A STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER TO



Shop on behalf of the older person, going to the grocery store and assist with the collection and purchase of groceries.



Transport the individual to the grocery store and assists in retrieving items off high shelves or in lifting heavy items.



Assist in carrying the groceries into the home upon return and will assist with putting the groceries away as needed.

## Position description

### VOLUNTEER JOB DUTIES

- Shop on behalf of older adults at local stores for groceries, personal care items, prescriptions or other items as specified OR transport older adults to shopping locations and assist them in obtaining needed items
- Assist in carrying groceries into the home upon return and putting groceries away
- Record on a timesheet each shopping trip and submit to OFA once a month

### SKILLS REQUIRED:

- Friendly, courteous, patient, dependable and punctual
- Valid drivers license and safe driving record
- Access to a vehicle that is reliable, clean and suitable to clients needs
- Communicate effectively with individuals of varying levels of function
- Stand for long periods of time and walk long distances
- Lift up to 15lbs
- Bend and reach low and high shelves and into freezer compartments
- Accurately manage money
- Strong written and verbal skills



# Shopping Assistance Volunteer FAQs

**WHY IS VOLUNTEERING WITH OFA IMPORTANT?** Volunteering your time helps older adults age 60+ in Schuyler County remain safe, healthy and independent in the place they love most, home.

**WHY IS THERE A VETTING PROCESS FOR VOLUNTEERS?** Older adults are a vulnerable population and in order to protect our clients, we require all volunteers to complete a volunteer application, criminal background check, motor vehicle record check, reference check, phone interview and approval from both the Director of Office for the Aging and the County Administrator.

**HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO BE APPROVED TO VOLUNTEER?** It typically takes about 1-2 weeks to be approved.

**HOW MANY HOURS AND HOW OFTEN WILL I BE EXPECTED TO VOLUNTEER?** Shopping Assistance assignments are completed based on your availability. We can set up a volunteer schedule that works for you. Whether that be once a week, once a month or as needed, just mention your preferences when you complete the volunteer application.

**HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO VOLUNTEER?** Shopping Assistance has many varying factors to consider, but a typical shopping trips takes about 2 hours round trip.

**HOW DO I SIGN UP?** Call Schuyler County Office for the Aging at 607-535-7108 to request a volunteer application, or email [hpatelunas@co.schuyler.ny.us](mailto:hpatelunas@co.schuyler.ny.us). The volunteer application can either printed and mailed or emailed.

**WHEN DO I START TRAINING?** Once OFA receives your completed volunteer application, they will review it and an OFA staff member will reach out to you when we have an open position and set up training.

**WHAT IF I DON'T LIVE IN SCHUYLER COUNTY?** We accept volunteers from outside of Schuyler County. Snowbirds are welcome too!

**WILL I ALWAYS VOLUNTEER WITH THE SAME CLIENTS?** Not always. While we do try to keep it consistent, it's not guaranteed.

**CAN I RESCHEDULE IS SOMETHING COMES UP?** Yes! Please give us as much advance notice as possible so we are able to find a backup driver.

**DO I NEED A CAR?** Yes! All vehicles must be in good working order and inspected as required by NYS law. All vehicles must be clean, with no loose objects in the interior of the car. Absolutely no smoking or electronic cigarettes are permitted in the vehicle. Drivers must drive their own vehicle.

**WILL I BE REIMBURSED FOR MILEAGE IF I DRIVE?** Yes! All volunteers wishing to receive mileage reimbursement must initially complete a W9 form. Volunteers must submit mileage reimbursement form to the Volunteer Coordinator once a month, and will receive a reimbursement check in the mail.

**ARE FACE MASK, GLOVES & HAND SANITIZER PROVIDED?** Yes! Please call 607-535-7108 to request masks, gloves and refillable hand sanitizer bottles & refills and we will prepare it for you, marked with your name to pick up from the deputies at the front desk in the Human Services Building located at 323 Owego St., Montour Falls.



# Volunteer Opportunities



**HOME DELIVERED MEALS**- deliver delicious & nutritious meals to homebound older adults.



**SHOPPING ASSISTANCE** - Assist older adults with grocery shopping and/or medication pick up.



**PERSONAL & MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION** - provide transportation to meet the personal needs of clients such as medical appointments, ride to grocery store, pharmacy, banking, hair appointments & more.



**CONGREGATE MEAL SITE ASSISTANT & KITCHEN HELPER** - Assist at congregational meals sites with various kitchen related duties.



**ENTERTAINMENT** - Professional performers volunteer their time to provide entertainment.



**EDUCATION** - Professional educators to provide both virtual or in person courses to older adults For example history, writing club, book club, arts & crafts.



**HEALTH & WELLNESS** - Health & Wellness professionals volunteer their time to provide a program or service.



**VIDEO CAMERA OPERATOR/VIDEO EDITING** - Assist with operating and shooting video and/or video editing for social media and other special projects.



**HELLO NEIGHBOR** - Friendly phone chat and safety check once a week to homebound older adults.



**HEALTH INSURANCE COUNSELORS** - provide free, unbiased Medicare counseling to Medicare beneficiaries.



**CLERICAL** - Handling all types of office duties including but not limited to making phone calls, filing, data entry, preparing mailings.



**ADVISORY COUNCIL** - Voluntary group that provide information, guidance, advice and support to the Office for the Aging to develop, coordinate and administer services to older persons.



**PUBLIC RELATIONS** - Public relations including the Golden Glow newsletter and many other custom opportunities available.

## LEARN MORE

about our Volunteer Opportunities

**CALL 607-535-7108**